



# EMS BULLETIN

Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services, Virginia Department of Health

Summer 2007

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**VDH** VIRGINIA  
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**Virginia**  
OFFICE OF  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES  
Virginia Department of Health

## Recognizing the EMS Response to VA Tech

*By: Gary Brown, Director*

On April 16, 2007, as the events that were occurring on the Virginia Tech campus unfolded, our Nation watched the response of multiple EMS agencies to Virginia Tech. What they saw was an organized response to a major EMS incident.

Virginia Tech Rescue Squad took a remarkable leadership role by providing incident command for EMS. They demonstrated the training and knowledge that they had learned through practice, experience and pre-planning. Along with the help of other regional EMS agencies, Virginia Tech Rescue Squad displayed a



professional response in the face of a horrific event.

The Staff of the Office of EMS (OEMS) would like to recognize the professionalism, dedication, and strength displayed by the members of Virginia Tech Rescue Squad and all other rescue squads that responded as they worked to provide the highest level of care to those injured during the event.

Throughout the days ahead, OEMS will continue to keep the EMS and first respond-

ers, the Virginia Tech staff and students, their families and the community in our thoughts and prayers. Thank you for your compassion, skill and service.

## Changes to the RSAF Application Process

*By: Amanda Davis, Grants Administrator*

The next deadline for the Rescue Squad Assistance Fund (RSAF) is Sept. 17, 2007. All applications are due in by 5 p.m. Items eligible for funding can include programs, services, equipment, vehicles, computers, EMS management programs, courses/classes and projects benefiting the recruitment and retention of EMS members. There have been several changes implemented within the

RSAF grant program, all of which are effective Sept. 17, 2007 and are outlined below.

\* All submissions will only be accepted under the general grant fund. The Office of EMS (OEMS) will determine if your grant application falls within one of the priority funding categories. All grantees that are applying under the intent of funding a priority category

must submit the Special Priorities Questionnaire for all priorities excluding recruitment/retention. The Recruitment/Retention Questionnaire must be submitted for that priority.

OEMS has identified six priority levels for funding in no particular order.

- Recruitment and Retention (including Management and Leadership)

**Continued on Page 3**

# Keeping The Best! Retention Workshops

By: Rohn Brown, Technical Assistance Coordinator

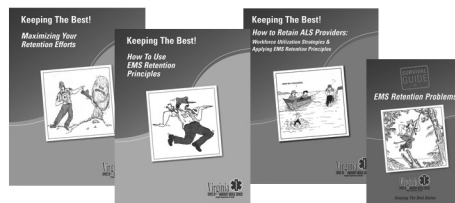
Dates have been set for the summer and fall 2007 classes for the Keeping The Best! workbooks. Each workshop is one day and will last eight hours. The sessions will feature facilitated group activities and tips on how EMS leaders can get the most out of the workbooks.

Class space is limited to encourage interaction and discussion, so EMS agency leaders are encouraged to limit their registration to two representatives per agency. Go to the OEMS Web site for dates and registration information at [www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems) or go to the registration page at [www.vaems.org/retention](http://www.vaems.org/retention).

To learn more about each workbook prior to registration, you can download your own copy at the OEMS Web site or e-mail [emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov) for assistance. More classes are also planned for 2008, so check the OEMS Web site for updates.

## Maximizing Your Retention Efforts

**forts** – This workbook is designed for EMS agency leaders who are working through retention issues while experiencing significant growth and change such as the integration of career and volunteer personnel. Participants will learn a systematic process to work



through change and review the importance of the recruiting process and the application of key retention principles. Directors and chiefs of combination (volunteer and career) departments will find this workshop particularly useful.

**How To Use EMS Retention Principles** – This workbook is targeted at appointed and elected EMS leaders to

help them understand and use basic retention principles in day-to-day EMS agency operations. Participants will learn how the life-cycle, belonging, success, and friends and family principles apply to EMS retention programs. While this workbook was originally designed for volunteer EMS leaders, career agencies have found these retention principles just as useful.

**Train-the-Trainer classes** – EMS leaders who complete the eight-hour classes *Maximizing Your Retention Efforts* and/or *How To Use EMS Retention Principles* and want to teach either or both classes may apply to become trainers. If you are interested in becoming a trainer, please e-mail [emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov) for the criteria and more information.

For more information about the Keeping The Best! workbooks or trainings, contact Rohn Brown at [emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov)

# Get Answers to Your Questions About Strokes

Submitted By: Keltcie Delamar, State Health Alliances Director, American Heart Association

The Virginia Stroke Systems of Care Leadership Team invites providers, physicians and other EMS professionals to use the Virginia Stroke Systems Ambassador Panel (VSSAP) which allows you to tap into the expertise that is available to Virginia stroke professionals.

Since the inception and launch of the VSSAP, the group has responded to a wide variety of questions. The questions submitted to the panel have come from nurses, stroke coordinators, physicians and administrative personnel across the state.

Topics have included :

- EMS and acute care protocols,
- Joint Commission Primary Stroke Center Certification,
- Patient satisfaction surveys,
- The role of neurologists in acute imaging,
- Stroke program design and
- Multi-media resources for community and professional education.

VSSAP is comprised of psychiatrists, neuro-radiologists, neurologists, emergency physicians, nurses, EMS leadership, hospital administrators, legislative and advocacy personnel, stroke program coordinators and experts in stroke program development and stroke systems of care. The panel has been imple-

mented to meet a pressing need across the state for a single authoritative and free resource for questions regarding stroke program design, development, evaluation and performance improvement.

Take advantage of this resource now and share this with your colleagues who may benefit, as well. E-mail your confidential questions to [va.strokesystems@heart.org](mailto:va.strokesystems@heart.org).

For more information contact Keltcie Delamar, State Health Alliances Director, American Heart Association at 804-965-6571 or e-mail [keltcie.delamar@heart.org](mailto:keltcie.delamar@heart.org).

## Changes to the RSAF Application Process

*Continued from Page 1*

- Training
- Emergency Operations
- Emergency Medical Dispatch
- Special and Innovative Projects
- Multi-Jurisdictional/Agency Projects

\* All grants must be submitted online. This may be done by downloading the Consolidated Grant Application Program (CGAP) software from the OEMS Web site or requesting a CGAP software CD.

\* The Microsoft (MS) Vista operating system has replaced Windows XP. If you have purchased a new computer since Jan. 30, 2007 you will now be operating under the MS Vista operating system. The CGAP software is not compatible with MS Vista, however OEMS is taking measures to effectively resolve this issue, although it will not be resolved by the Sept. 17 grant deadline. Please maintain your hardware prior to Jan. 2007 in order to effectively download the CGAP software. If you are having issues submitting your RSAF grant application online, the OEMS advises all grant applicants to consult with your local



RSAF grants can fund medical equipment like AEDs.

EMS Regional Council for assistance.

\* The Operational Medical Director (OMD) signature is required for all RSAF grant applications. An electronic signature will be accepted for the OMD or an original signature must be received ten working days after the final grant deadline. If the OMD is unavailable, the signature of the Regional OMD will be accepted.

\* The grant affirmation page has been revised to include the signature of the Authorized Agent, Financial Officer and the OMD. Electronic signatures will be accepted for all parties or original signatures must be received

ten working days after the final grant deadline. You must also include your Federal/Employer Identification Number (FIN/EIN) and your official business name, as registered with the IRS and the Virginia State Corporation Commission. You must include a copy of your most recent federal tax return from the IRS (Form 990)

\* Grant applications submitted under \$500.00 for line items will automatically be disqualified from the grant review process. Each line item submitted on the grant application must be \$500.00 or more to progress to the grant review process. Like items may be consolidated in one line item with all individual pricing combined.

If you have any questions, want to download the CGAP software, questionnaires or need more information on the RSAF grant program or process please visit the OEMS Web site at [www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems) or call Amanda Davis, Grants Manager at (804) 864-7611 or Linwood Pulling, Grants Specialist at (804) 864-7612.

## Paramedic Scholarships Aid Recruitment & Retention

*Submitted By: Dana Love, Bensley-Bermuda Volunteer Rescue Squad*

The Bensley-Bermuda Volunteer Rescue Squad (BBVRS) announced the formation of the Patrick Gary Mason Memorial Advanced Life Support (ALS) Scholarship. Beginning in 2007, the Squad will designate from among its members up to four scholars annually who will receive full funding to an accredited advanced life support training center.

“Pat Mason, a devoted Squad member who died in the line of duty in 1981, was committed to advancing his education to help the community,” said Gary

Frame, President of BBVRS. “We feel it is important to link his memory to today’s members who are working to advance themselves in support of the community, and to help them undertake the financial burden of that education.”

Patrick Gary Mason died in the line of duty on November 8, 1981, while serving on the crash truck, what today the Squad calls its technical rescue team. Mason was struck by a vehicle along Jefferson Davis Highway while on the scene of a motor vehicle accident. Mason, a Virginia certified EMT at the

time of his death, was planning to enroll in ALS training beginning that following spring.

“Bensley is committed to recruiting and training our personnel to the highest levels of certification available, and to work to show ourselves as a leader in the retention of pre-hospital emergency care providers,” added Frame. BBVRS is always seeking community-minded individuals to join their team. Visit <http://www.bbvrs.org> for details.

## Staying Healthy in the Heat

By: Karen Owens, Emergency Operations Officer

With the warmer weather upon us, staying healthy in the heat is important, especially while working on an emergency scene. The following tips will assist you in staying healthy in the heat:

- Stay hydrated. Drink water before, during and after incidents to maintain proper hydration.
- Rest often. Tired responders may become a problem on the scene.
- Avoid sugary, carbonated drinks. They can increase the potential for dehydration.
- Stay cool. Use cool towels, misting fans, sprinklers or water hoses to stay cool.
- Know the symptoms of dehydration, heat stroke and heat exhaustion. If you begin exhibiting signs and symptoms, seek help immediately.
- Eat properly. Proper eating can help with energy levels while working, whether on the scene or at home.



Emergency workers need to take extra care to stay cool and hydrated while working during the summer months.

## HMERT Supports Jamestown Celebration

By: Frank Cheatham, HMERT Coordinator

After 12 months of planning and preparation, the Office of EMS (OEMS) Health and Medical Emergency Response Team (HMERT) resources were able to put their skills to the test during America's 400th Anniversary Celebration.

On May 11-13, 2007, OEMS provided resources to support James City County's EMS response to the Anniversary Celebration. Three EMS Task Forces responded: Western 14, NoVa 3 and Metro 11. A new member of the HMERT system also participated, East Hanover Bike Strike Team. The task forces provided personnel and trucks to assist with medical needs at the various celebration sites, while the bike team

provided EMS in the areas less accessible to ambulance and walking teams. Also deployed in support of the operation were members of the Coordination Teams, providing command and control support and the Dog Therapy Strike Team, providing rehabilitation services.

The deployment started Friday morning with teams receiving an operational briefing and then heading to their designated work areas. HMERT resources assisted with staffing of three First Aid tents set up throughout the Anniversary Celebration venues. The teams prepared themselves for massive crowds and medical problems associated with large crowds. Security and weather

played an important part in the weekend. With visits from President and Mrs. Bush and Governor Kaine, movement of personnel and trucks was limited due to security concerns. Weather changes from sunny and warm to rainy and cold, throughout the weekend caused medical problems related to heat and cold exposure. However, with over 70,000 people in attendance, patient interaction was minimal.

HMERT resources demobilized Sunday afternoon through Sunday evening and returned home, with once in a lifetime memories of an event recognized around the world.

## Are You 10-Percenter?

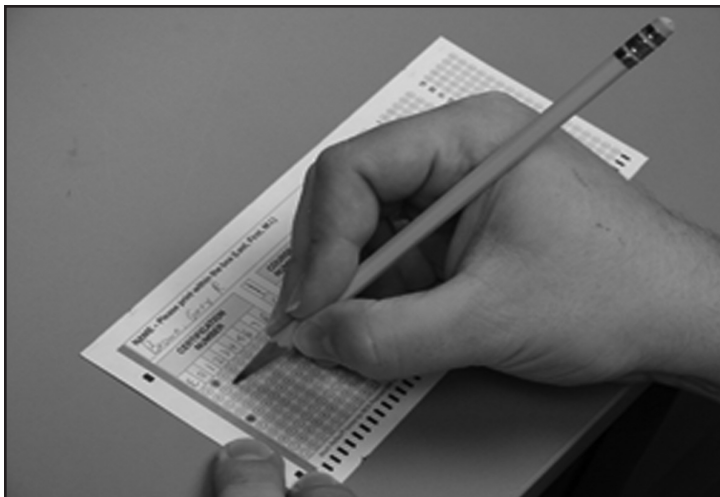
By: Greg Neiman, BLS Training Specialist

I know what you are thinking... "Greg, before I answer you, what is a 10-percenter?" Ok, fair enough I'll explain further.

The Office of EMS (OEMS) scanned over 175,000 continuing education (CE) cards, enrollment forms, tests, waivers, etc. in 2006. Of all the forms we scanned, between 10-15% of them had an error. That means between 17,500 and 26,250 forms.

There are primarily two types of errors. First there is incorrect data, and the second is bubble error. The majority of the errors OEMS sees are bubble errors. Which include forgetting to bubble the entire card or forgetting to bubble a section (such as certification number, date, course number, topic number and double bubbling/mis-bubbling; i.e. the person bubbles two bubbles in the same column). Every time a mistake is made on a bubble card, an error is generated, either at the scanner or in the system. An error in the

system means a provider does not receive credit for a course, topic or exam until someone can fix it.



Properly filling in your bubble card can ensure that there will be no delays with getting credit for your classes.

Now, I don't know if you have ever had the pleasure to meet or work with Ernestine Sutton and Toni Twyman, but they are the ones who can truly save you if you have become a 10-percenter - the provider who has made an error on a bubble sheet and submitted it to OEMS.

Ernestine receives, sorts and scans bubble cards every workday. If anyone ever tells you OEMS is behind in scanning, they're incorrect. OEMS scans every day. As the "Queen of the Scanner" Ernestine has the pleasure of dealing with all of the mis-bubbles. Both Ernestine and Toni spend much of their day trying to fix what they can. Those they can not correct are returned to providers and instructors when possible, otherwise they are placed into the permanent error file.

Bubbling errors can cause a delay in receiving CE credit or delay processing your test results. Don't be a 10-percenter. Take a few extra seconds to be sure you have completed your bubble card correctly. Spending an extra 30 seconds to assure proper bubbling will ensure smooth certification/recertification.

## Virginia EMS Communications Directory

By: Ken Crumpler, Communications Coordinator

A new communications directory is available from the Office of EMS (OEMS). This directory provides information for all municipal public safety answering points (PSAP), EMS dispatch centers, licensed EMS designated emergency response agencies (transport and non-transport), helicopter medevac services and hospitals in the commonwealth. All public safety first responders, communications centers and emergency managers will be able to use the information that is pro-

vided.

With the assistance of numerous state and local agencies and professional organizations, the information has been compiled into one document and placed on the OEMS Web site. Go to [www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems). The directory can be found in the emergency operations section of the Web site.

For this directory to always have current information, PSAPs and agencies can provide corrections, updates and

edits to [emscomms@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:emscomms@vdh.virginia.gov). The updates will be confirmed and corrections made as soon as possible.

All public safety agencies are encouraged to download this document. Printed copies will be provided to all licensed EMS agencies and communications centers in the near future.

Contact OEMS at (800) 523-6019 or e-mail [emscomms@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:emscomms@vdh.virginia.gov) with any questions or comments.

# Straight From The Rumor Mill... Regulations Myths & More

By: Michael Berg, Regulations & Compliance Manager

Here are a couple more commonly asked questions and misconceptions that providers in the field may have. These frequently asked questions have been answered by Michael D. Berg, Regulations and Compliance Manager.

Q: "I was told by my chief that even though I was convicted of a misdemeanor drug possession charge, I can still take an EMT course."

A: Wrong. 12 VAC 5-31-910 (4) Criminal or enforcement history states in part:

"4. Has never been convicted or found guilty of any crime involving the use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs except that person is eligible for

affiliation five years after the date of final release if no additional crimes of this type have been committed during that time."

Date of final release is that time from any sentence imposed by the Virginia Court system AND any probationary time issued. Individuals who are not sure if they are qualified to enter into an EMS training program in Virginia because of a past issue, should contact the OEMS for clarification.

Q: "We are hearing that we must have an AED along with our combination monitor defibrillator (AED and Manual capable) on our units. We also were told we had to change the energy settings

per OEMS Rules and Regulations"

A: This is partly correct. We do require that an AED be on every permitted EMS vehicle in Virginia, BUT, we do say in 12 VAC 5-31-860 required vehicle equipment that "This may be a combination device that also has manual defibrillation capability." Regarding the energy settings for delivery of shock, that is an issue that is addressed by your Operational Medical Director, not OEMS.

For the most complete and direct answers, contact either your local OEMS program representative or this Office, (800) 523-6019.

## Get To Know Your Rep...

Heather Phillips is an Office of EMS program representative located in the Lord Fairfax area, Heather provides support and assistance to her region and finds the time and energy she spends traveling to locations very rewarding.

### What's your favorite part of being a program representative?

The best part of my job is my ability to provide technical assistance to my region and to actually see the agencies improve and meet the needs of their communities. To know that I have helped them reach a higher level of service is very satisfying.

### What would you change about being a program rep if you could?

There would be more of us, that way we could spend more time with each individual agency and less time traveling to them. We would be able to do more spot inspections and provide even more help and services.

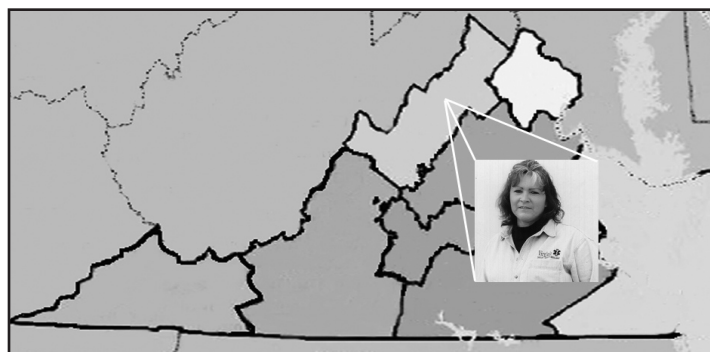
### Which part of your region do you like

### to travel through the best?

I always enjoy Luray in Page County. It has such a friendly and inviting atmosphere. They have great restaurants, very friendly people and the scenery is breath taking. I suggest everyone take the time to travel to Luray to experience all they have to offer.

### So what do you do in your spare time other than continuing to assist your region?

Well, when I get the chance I tattoo. I'm an apprentice tattooist and I have to fulfill 1500 hours of apprenticeship work plus 100 hours of performance work and I normally only get to practice on Saturdays. I also love to camp and spend time with my family. I'm particularly excited about our vacation this summer. We're going on a three



Heather Phillips, Lord Fairfax Program Representative

week trip to South Dakota.

### What advice would you give to EMS Agencies?

I always advocate being familiar with the EMS regulations and comply with them. The agencies are serving the public, therefore they need to be aware of what they can and cannot do. I also suggest that agencies be honest with their program rep. Being honest about problems, questions, incidents, etc. is always the best way to go because your program rep will do everything that they can to help you fix the problems, better your agency and help you serve the public to the best of your ability.

## Upcoming Events

### July

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

7/11 - Professional Development Committee, 10:30 a.m.

7/12 - Medical Direction Committee, 10:30 a.m.; EMSC Committee, 3 p.m.

7/14 - EMS Instructor Update, 9 a.m.

7/20 - ALS Coordinator Meeting, contact Tom Nevetral for details

7/21 - ALS Coordinator Seminar, contact Tom Nevetral for details

7/26 - Medevac Committee, 10:30 a.m.; Workforce Development Committee, 10:30 a.m.

### August

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	26	28	29	30	31	

8/2 - Emergency Management Committee, 10 a.m.

8/4 - EMS Instructor Update, 9 a.m.

8/6 - Transportation Committee, 1 p.m.

8/8 - Critical Incident Stress Management Committee, 10 a.m.

8/16 - Regional EMS Council Director's meeting, 9 a.m.; Financial Assistance Review Committee (FARC), 1 p.m.; Regulations and Policy Committee, 3 p.m.

8/17 - Communications Committee, 9 a.m.; Financial Legislative & Planning Committee, 9 a.m.; VAGEMSA, 10 a.m., State EMS Advisory Board, 1 p.m.

### September

Su	M	T	W	TH	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

9/6 - Trauma System Oversight & Management Committee, 10 a.m.

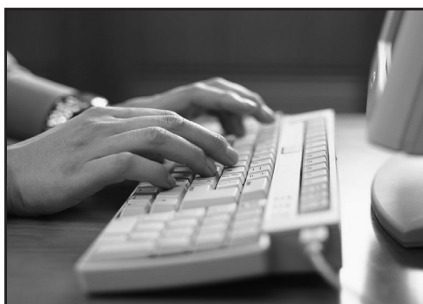
9/7 - Governor's Award Committee, 10 a.m.

9/8 - EMS Instructor Update, 9 a.m.

9/15 - Deadline for RSAF Grant applications, 5 p.m.

9/20 - Trauma Performance Improvement Committee, 10 a.m.

9/29 - EMS Instructor Update, 9 a.m..



Please check our Web site for event locations and possible changes at [www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems)

## 28th Annual Virginia EMS Symposium

*"An Education for Life"*



- Over 200 classes to meet your CE needs
- A full day of pre-conference classes on Nov. 7th
- Experience the new 'Critical Care Medics Gone Wild' series
- Compete in the new Stars for Life Championship hosted by Bob Page
- Enjoy the Governor's EMS Awards Banquet on Saturday, Nov. 11th and much more

The registration catalog will be coming to your agency's mailbox and to our Web site [www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems) later this summer!

**November 7 - 11, 2007**

**Norfolk Waterside Marriott, Norfolk, VA**

The Virginia Department of Health Office of Emergency Medical Services publishes the EMS Bulletin quarterly. If you would like to receive this publication via e-mail please send your request to [emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov).

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## EMS in Brief

### EMS Management Manuals Available for Download

Can you fire a volunteer? What documentation should you keep when implementing progressive discipline? What are some tips to help avoid disciplinary problems? *Discipline and Due Process for the EMS Agency* is an excellent resource manual for volunteer and career EMS agencies looking to strengthen or assess their discipline program. L. Dayton Haugh, an attorney and veteran EMS manager, backs up this outline of key topics with examples from volunteer and career EMS systems.

Why should an EMS agency have a strategic plan? What is a mission statement? How do you prepare to write a strategic plan? Why is a strategic plan important? Jim Kelly, a veteran paramedic and fire and EMS planner with

Chesterfield Fire and EMS, provides a structure for EMS agencies to start the strategic planning process and a variety of examples from Virginia EMS agencies. His manual will help "sell" the importance of strategic planning to EMS agency leadership.

These manuals are downloadable from the Office of EMS (OEMS) Web site at [www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems/Locality\\_Resources/leadership.asp](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems/Locality_Resources/leadership.asp) or send an e-mail to [emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov) for assistance.

### Office of EMS & State EMS Advisory Board Public Town Forums

OEMS staff along with EMS Advisory Board members will discuss and answer questions on hot topics facing the Virginia EMS System including ALS

and BLS accreditation, EMS funding, the Regional Council study and more.

The upcoming town forum will be held in the following regional council area:

#### Central Shenandoah October 16

Visit the OEMS Web site for more information at [www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems) or e-mail [emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov).